

Dear members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee:

I strongly oppose HB 5653 AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION.

This is nothing more than a veiled attempt to further encumber law abiding citizens in this state who happen to own firearms. An excise tax is regressive and will disproportionately affect those with lower incomes. Guns and ammo are ALREADY subject to an additional 11% tax on top of the CT sales tax.

As for reducing gun violence, this will have no effect. As it stands today, one is unable to purchase ammunition in Connecticut unless they have a permit to carry firearms and have undergone a thorough background check by their local police as well as an FBI fingerprint check. These are law abiding citizens who have been run through the national criminal background check system. They are not the source of violent crime that involves the use of firearms. Criminals are. That is who the State should be targeting by enforcement of current laws.

I also believe a strong argument can be made that this additional excise tax would be an infringement on the second amendment of the constitution of Connecticut as well as the United States.

My understanding is that the revenue generated by such a tax would be used to finance programs aimed at reducing gun violence. Here is a more useful idea.

Ask any police officer that works in urban areas, and they will tell you that crime is out of control and offenders often suffer no consequences for their crimes. CT has a very poor record when it comes to prosecuting people involved in crimes where a firearm was used. Why is this?

I propose that rather than come up with new taxes, or laws that only serve to encumber legal gun owners, enforce our current laws and prosecute every person who uses a gun in commission of a crime, especially violent crimes. This will reduce gun related violent crime.

Passing laws that restrict the rights of gun owners makes as much sense as restricting the ability of all people to drive a car, in order to reduce drunk driving. Instead, we penalize those who drive drunk.

Let's apply the same common sense to gun laws. Prosecute criminals. Leave law abiding gun owners alone. Connecticut has already unfairly encumbered them with their existing gun laws.

Respectfully,

Jack Gorfien